

Washington Transportation Plan

Safety

How do we make transportation systems and facilities throughout the state safer for their users?

Transportation safety is a paramount concern in all forms of transportation: airplanes, ferries, buses, trains, roadways, marine ports, bicycles, and pedestrians. The data tell us that roadway safety, including bicyclists and pedestrians, is our biggest concern, accounting for 600 annual fatalities. Because of this most of the discussion that follows is focused on understanding our roadway safety issue, followed by a brief summary of safety concerns of other modes. In addition, transportation system security is an area that has recently moved into the forefront of public concern.

What The Data Are Telling Us

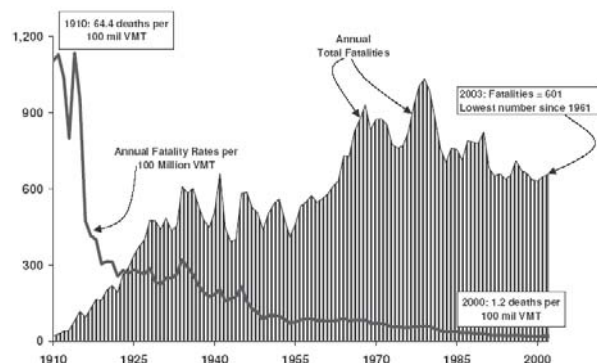
Despite declines, fatalities continue to be a serious problem

The number of deaths on Washington's roadways has declined over the past several years. Even so, more than 600 people die in collisions in Washington State each year – an unacceptable number despite our progress.

On Washington's highway system, collisions of all types (non-injury, other injury, disabling injury, and fatal) have gone up since 1980, from 34,662 in 1980 to 50,157 in 2002, an increase of 45 percent. However the fatality rate in the chart below has tended to steadily decline from 1915 forward.

The societal cost of motor vehicle collisions for all roadways (state, county, city, tribal, and federal) is estimated at \$5.6 billion annually. Although fatal collisions make up only 2.5 percent of the total number of collisions, they account for 54 percent of the total societal costs.

Washington Motor Vehicle Total Fatalities & Fatality Rates *
1910 - 2002



**Washington State
Department of Transportation**



**Washington State
Transportation Commission**